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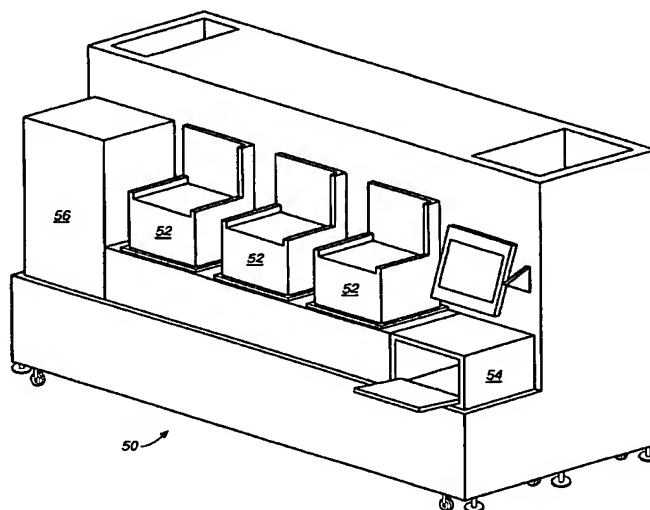
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(54) Title: UNIVERSAL RETICLE TRANSFER SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A specially adapted SMIF pod (20) receives and holds one particular type of reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132) selected from among dozens of different configurations thereof. The SMIF pod (20) may be interrogated to determine the particular type of reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132) carried therein. A reticle transfer system (50) receives a pair of such SMIF pods (20), interrogates each of the SMIF pods (20) to ascertain which type of reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132) the SMIF pod (20) carries, and automatically moves reticles (42) through a controlled environment from one reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132) to another reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132). A reticle reorienter (56) includable in the system (50) also permits automatically exchanging reticles (42) between a reticle carrier (144) and a reticle cassette (36) or reticle holder (132).



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